Hopping 2.1: Introduction to hopping
5 - 8 year olds

Introduction (1 - 2 minutes)

*Hopping requires a lot of strength in one leg, as well as good balance.*

*Can you think of reasons why it is good to know how to hop?*

Warm-up: Jumping and hopping (5 minutes)

- Each child has one skipping rope, and lays it out in a straight line.
- Invite the children to explore different ways to jump and hop over their rope.
- Children should land without falling down.
- Leader should move through the activity space and observe.
- Allow children time to explore different jumps and hops at their own pace.
- Emphasize landing with control and as softly as possible.
- Encourage children to try different jumps and hops:
  - *jump off two feet and land on one.*
  - *hop off one foot and land on two.*
  - *hop back and forth over the skipping rope 5 times without stopping.*
  - *hop all the way around the rope with one foot.*
  - *hop all the way around the rope with the other foot.*
Demonstration: Hopping (2 - 3 minutes)

- Demonstrate to children that hopping means jumping off one foot and landing on the same foot.
- To keep balance, arms should be slightly bent and slightly raised like wings.
- Explain what the ball of their foot is and have children touch their own.
- Explain that this is the part of the foot to hop from and land on.
- Land softly by bending knee and ankle to absorb impact.

Practice: Exploring the hop – Follow the leader (8 - 10 minutes)

Children stand in their own space and follow the leader with different hops.

- Hop in place on right foot, then left foot.
- Hop softly so you don’t make a sound.
- Hop side to side.
- Hop forward, hop backwards.
- Hop forward and swing your arms.
- Hop five times in a row then change feet.
- Hop quickly, then hop slowly.
- Hop forward in a straight line.
- Hop, then jump, then hop, then jump.

Game: Hopping mazes (8 - 10 minutes)

- Form children into groups of 2-3 children.
- Each group has their own skipping rope, a few cones, and hula-hoops.
- Each group makes a maze on the floor that they must hop through.
- Once all groups have tried hopping through their own maze, they switch with other groups and try the other mazes.

Wrap-up (1 - 2 minutes)

Why are arms important in hopping and landing?

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTION

- When children are hopping forward, they can swing their non-hopping “bent leg” to jump further. This is called “hitch-kick”.
- If a child is not hopping very high, give them an object to hop over (e.g. line, rope, stick, small cone, mini-hurdle).
- If a child has trouble alternating feet, encourage the child to hold their non-hopping foot until they are comfortable with the hopping motion.

CUES

- Look forward
- Spring with leg on the ground
- Swing arms forward
- Soft touch down
- “Hitch-kick”